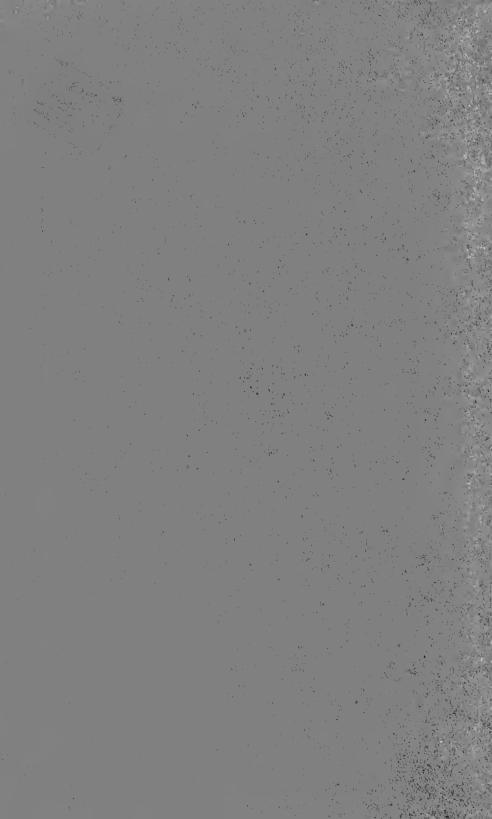
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Rudyard Kipling with The British Fleet

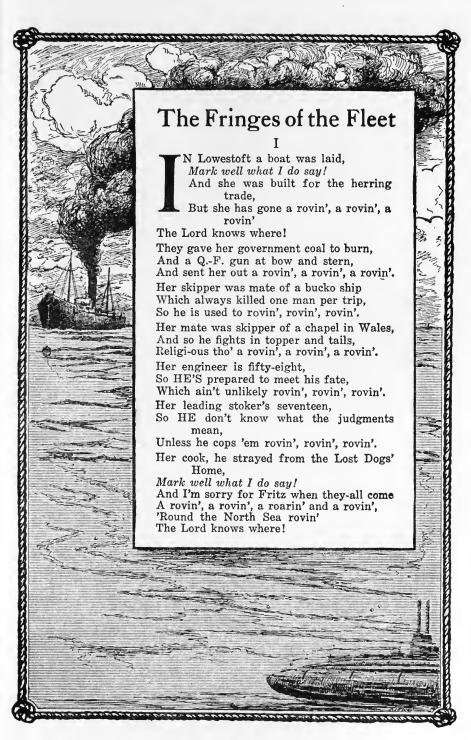
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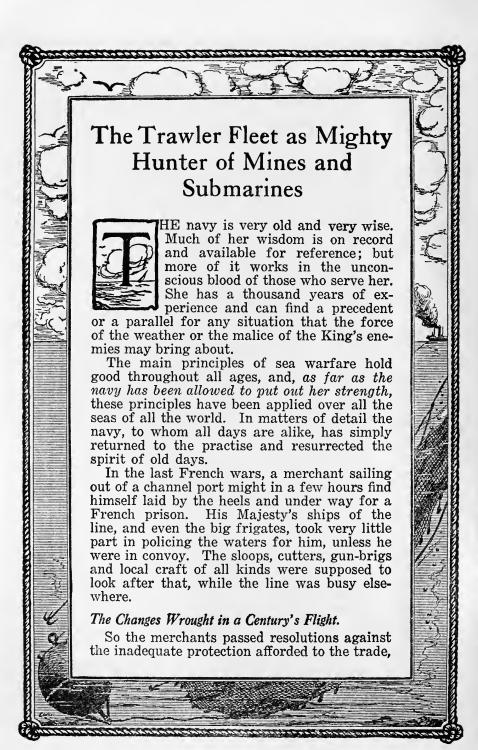
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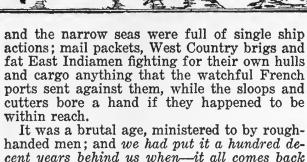
FOR THE

BOSTONMAMERICAN

VENING AND SUNDAY FIGHTY SUMMER STREET, BOSTON, MASS.







cent years behind us when-it all comes back again!

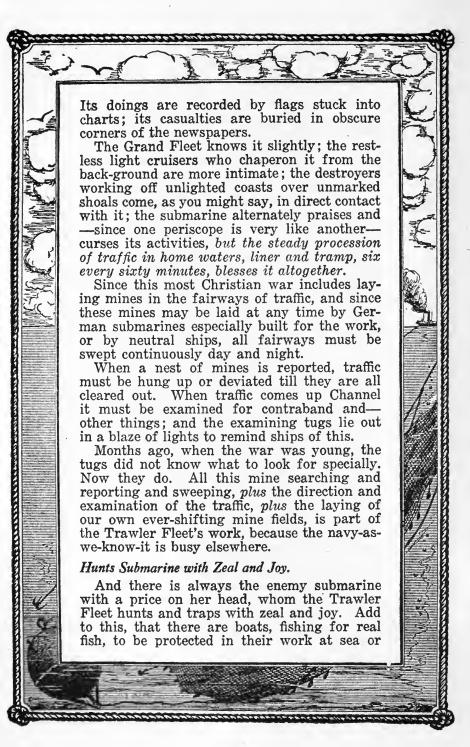
To-day there are no prisons for the crews of merchantmen, but they can go to the bottom by mine and torpedo even more quickly than their ancestors were run into Le Havre. submarine takes the place of the privateer; the line, as in the old days, is occupied bombarding and blockading elsewhere, but the seaborne traffic must continue, and that is being looked after by the lineal descendants of the crews of the long extinct cutters and sloops and gun-brigs. The hour struck, and they reappeared to the tune of fifty thousand men in more than two thousand ships, of which I have seen a few hundred.

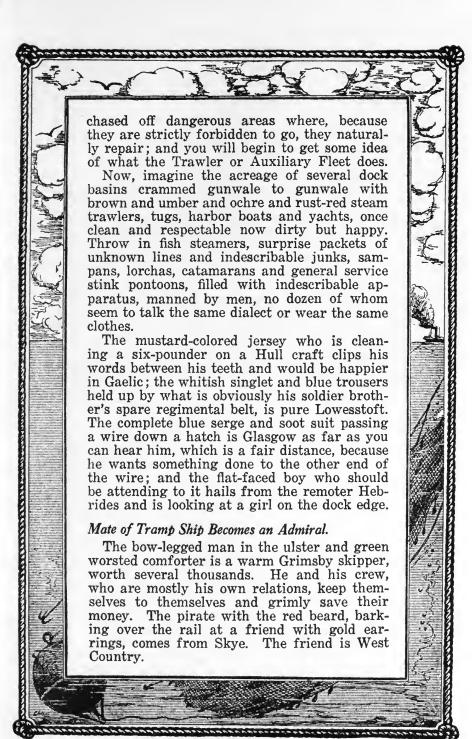
Words of command may have changed a little: the tools are certainly more complex, but the spirit of the new men who come to the old jobs is utterly unchanged. It is the same fierce, hard-living, heavy-handed, very cunning service out of which the navy as we know it today was born.

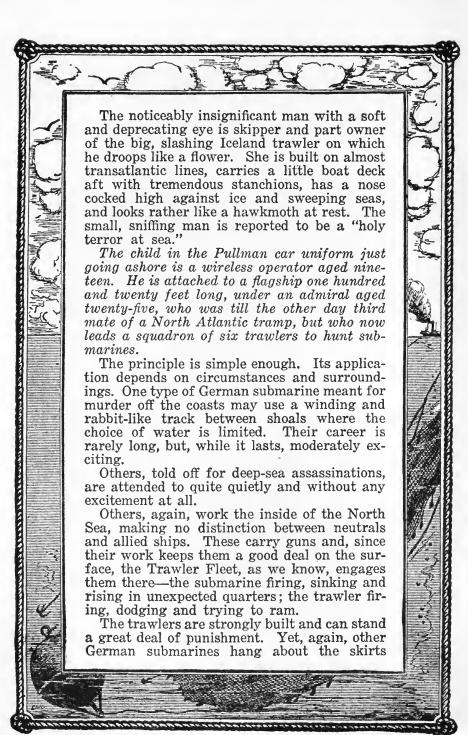
Trawler Fleet Gets Blessings of Traffic.

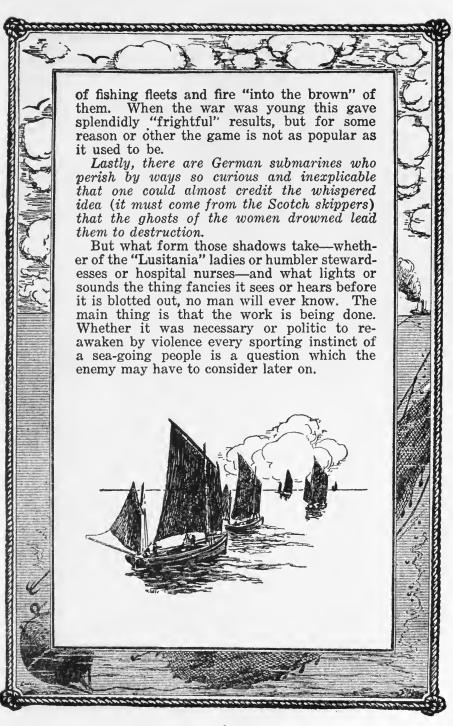
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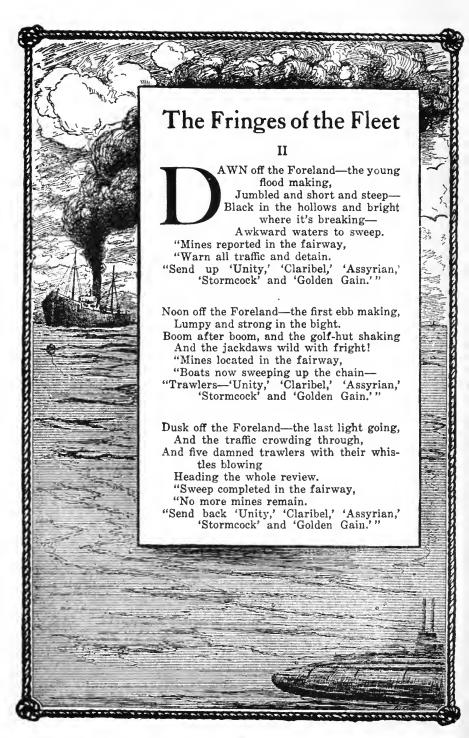
It is called indifferently the Trawler or Auxiliary Fleet. It is chiefly composed of fishermen, but it takes everyone who may have maritime tastes—from retired admirals to the son of the sea cook. It exists for the benefit of the traffic and the annoyance of the enemy.



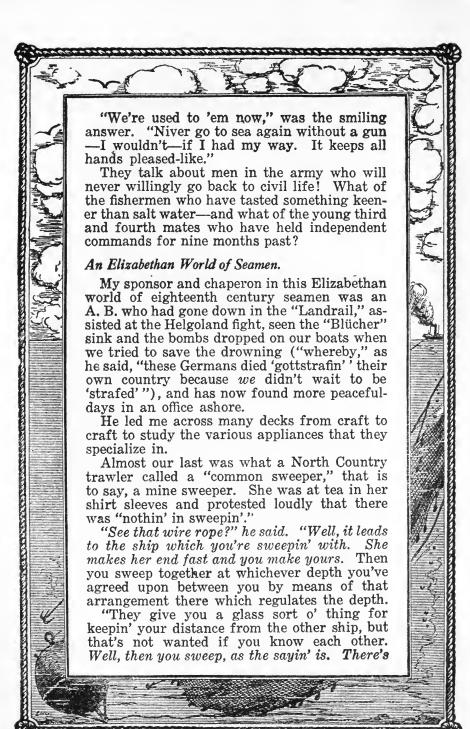


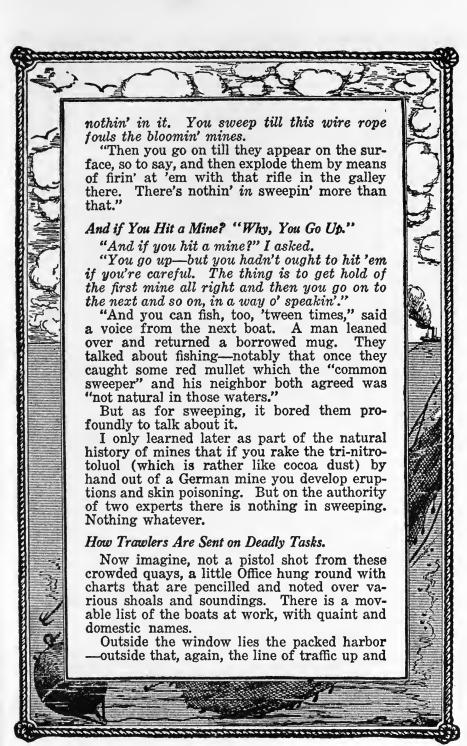


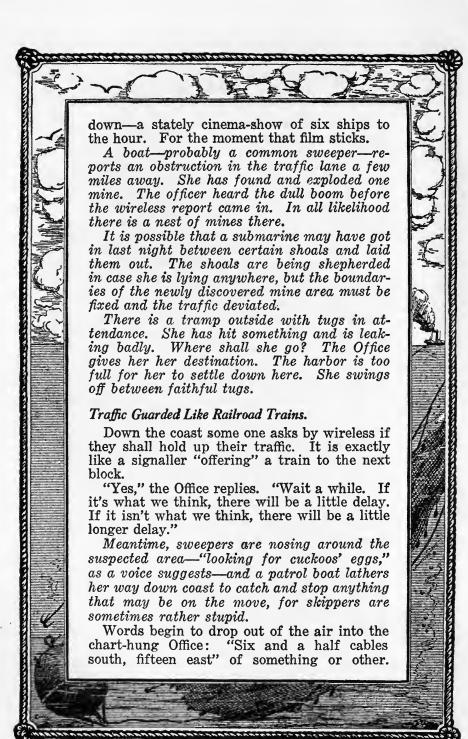


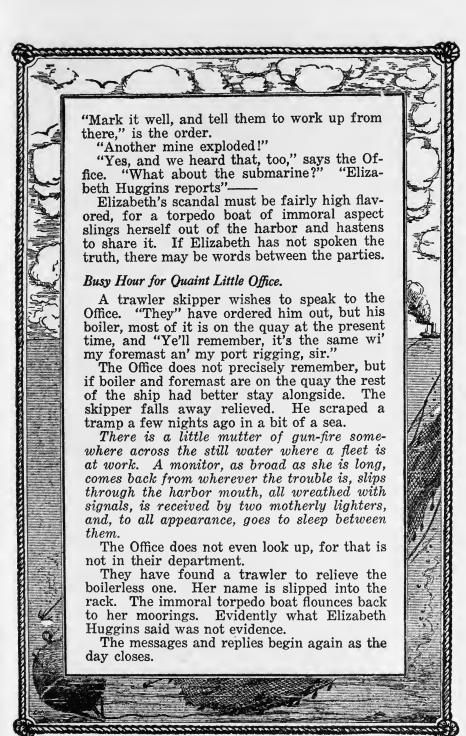


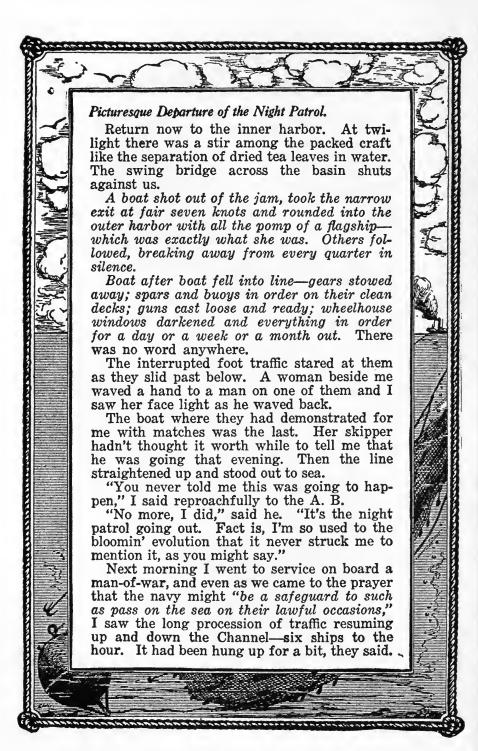


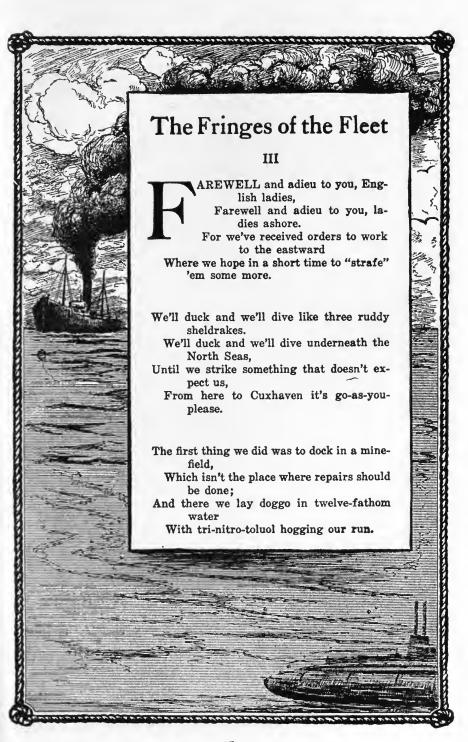


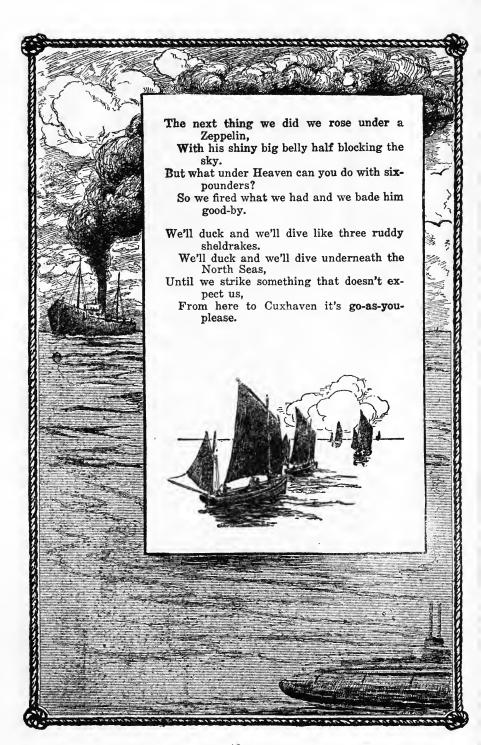


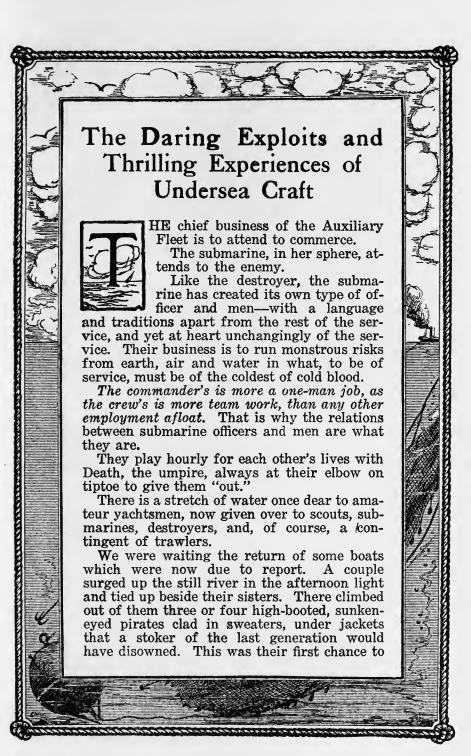


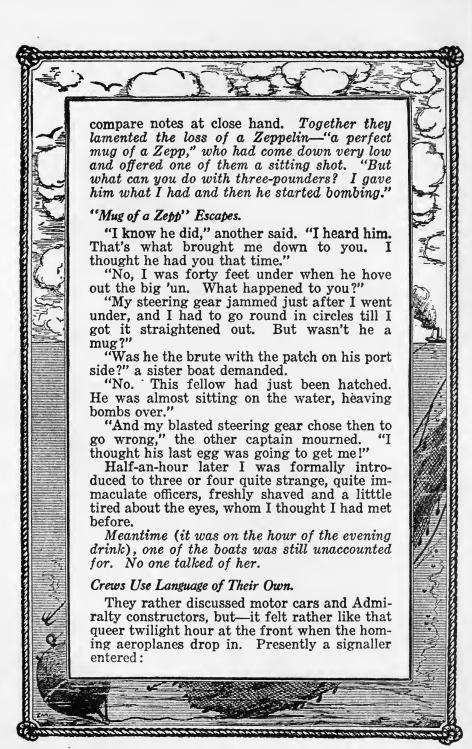


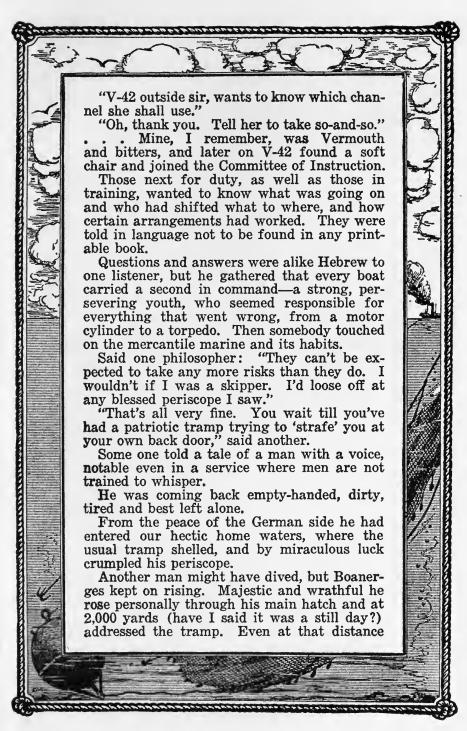


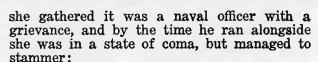












"Well, sir, at least you'll admit that our shooting was pretty good."

An Undersea "Thunderstorm."

"And that," said my informant, "put the lid on!" Boanerges went down lest he should be tempted to murder, and the tramp affirms she heard him rumbling beneath her like an inverted thunderstorm for fifteen minutes.

"All those tramps ought to be disarmed and we ought to have all their guns," said a voice

out of a corner.

"What! Still worrying over your 'mug'?"

someone replied.

"He was a mug," went on the man of one idea. "If I'd had a couple twelves, even, I could have 'strafed' him proper. I don't know whether I shall mutiny, desert, or write to the First Sea Lord about it."

"'Strafe' all Admiralty constructors to begin with. *I* could build a better boat with a four-inch lathe and a sardine tin than"—the speak-

er named her by letter and number.

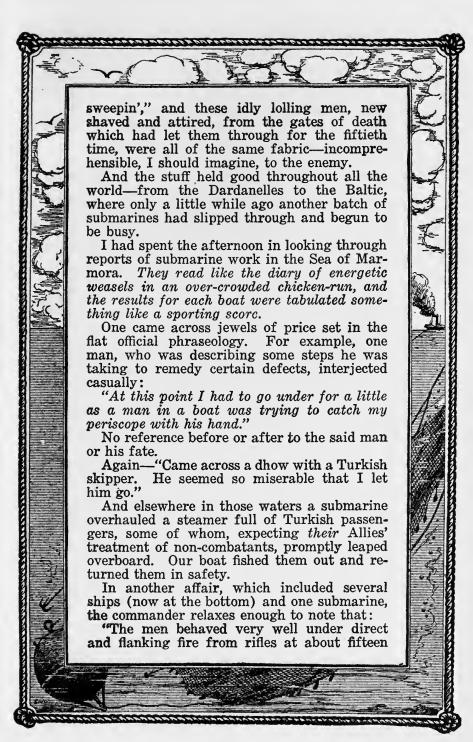
"That's pure jealousy," her commander explained to the company. "Ever since I installed—ahem!—my patent electric washbasin, he's been intriguin' to get her. Why? We know he doesn't wash. He'd only use the basin to keep beer in."

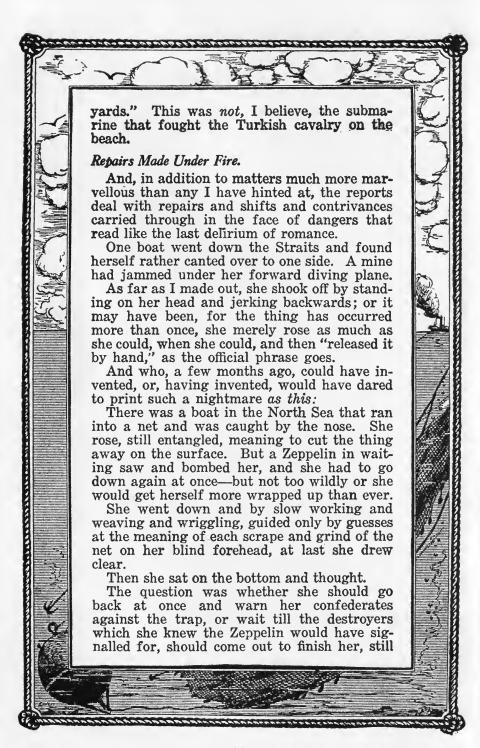
However often one meets it, as in this war one meets it at every turn, one never gets used

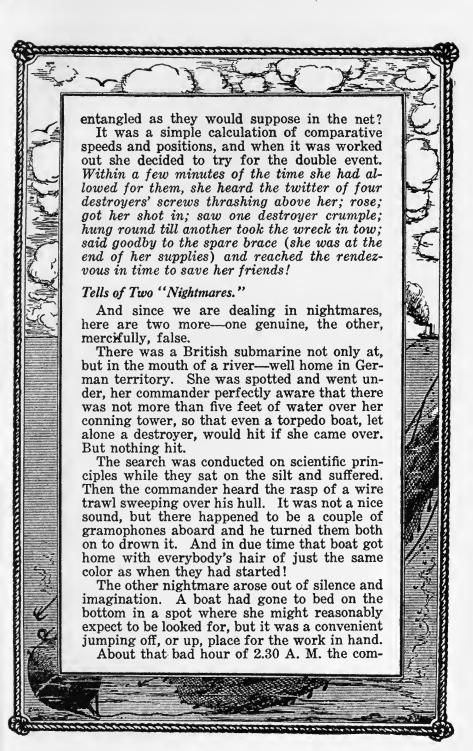
to the Holy Spirit of Man at his job.

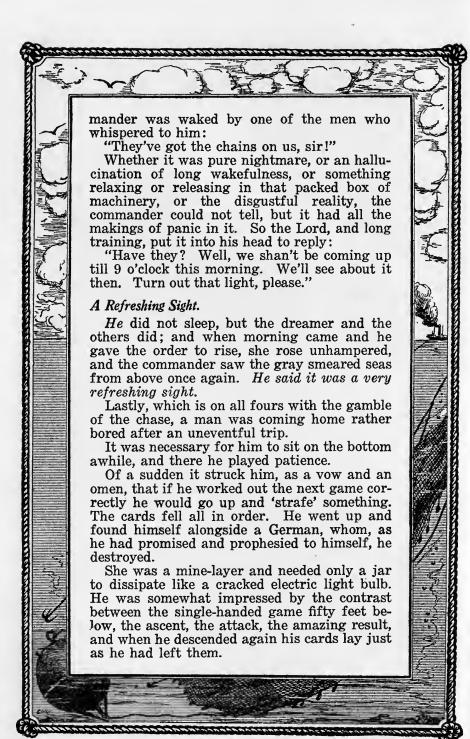
Results Like Sporting Score.

The "common sweeper," growling over his mug of tea that there was "nothing in

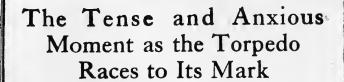














WAS honored by a glimpse into this veiled life by a boat which was merely practising between trips.

Submarines are like cats. They never tell whom they were with last night, and they sleep as much as

they can.

If you board a submarine off duty you generally see a perspective of foreshortened, fattish men laid all along. The men say that at certain times it is rather an easy life, with relaxed regulations about smoking, calculated to make a man put on flesh.

One requires well padded nerves. Many of the men do not appear on deck throughout the whole trip. They know that they are responsible in their department for their comrades' lives as their comrades are responsible for theirs. What's the use of flapping about?

The Etiquette of Meeting Mines.

When we set forth there had been some trouble in the fairway and a neutral victim of mines lay over on a sandbank nearby.

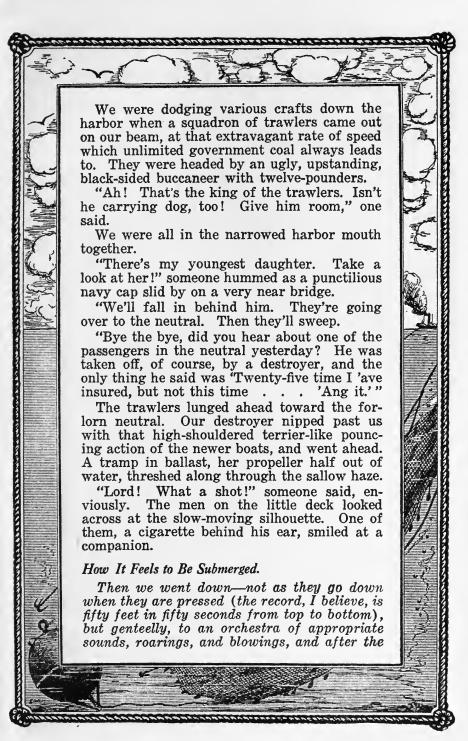
"Suppose there are more mines loose?" I

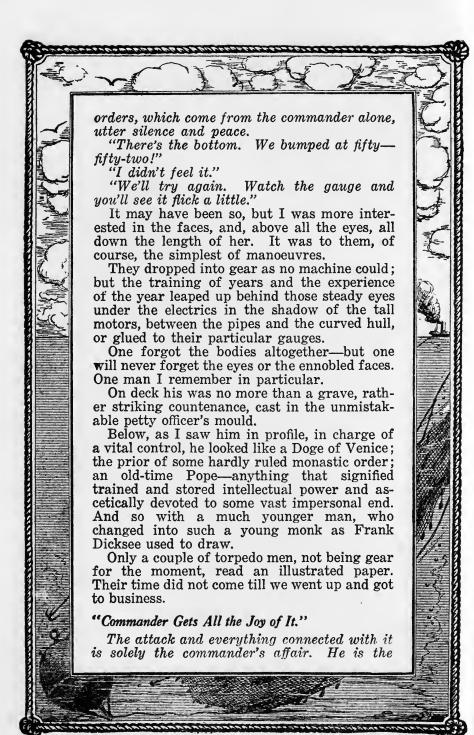
asked.

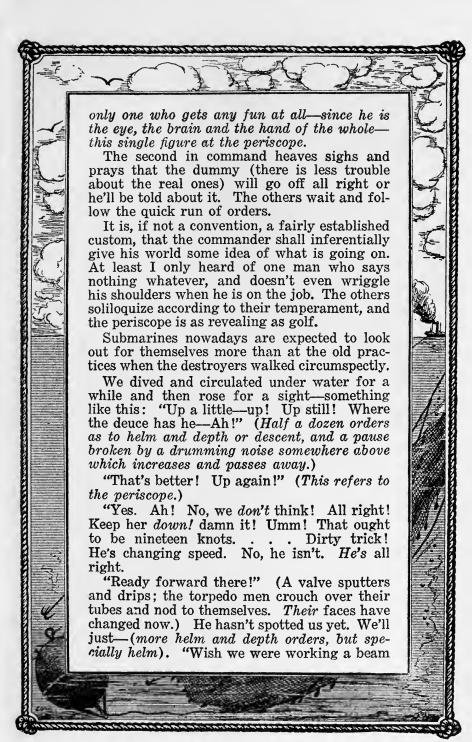
"We'll hope there aren't," was the soothing reply. "Mines are all Josh. You either hit'em or you don't. And if you do they don't always go off. They scrape alongside."

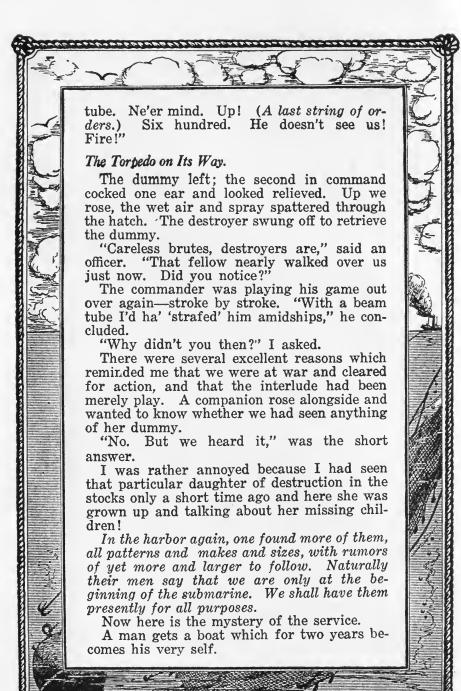
"What's the etiquette, then?"

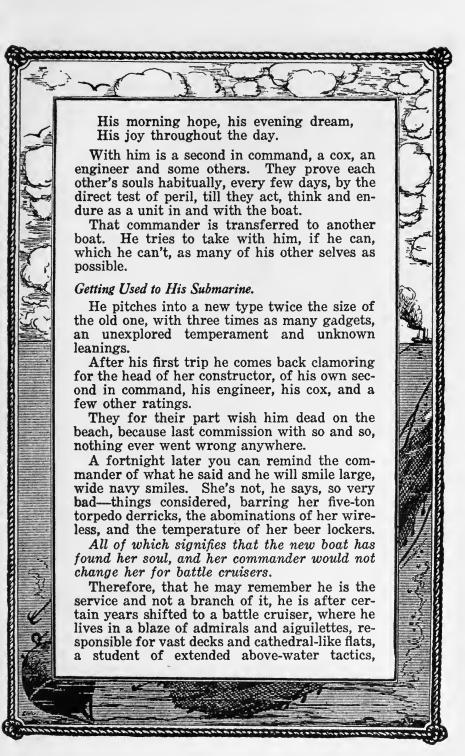
"Shut off both propellers and hope."

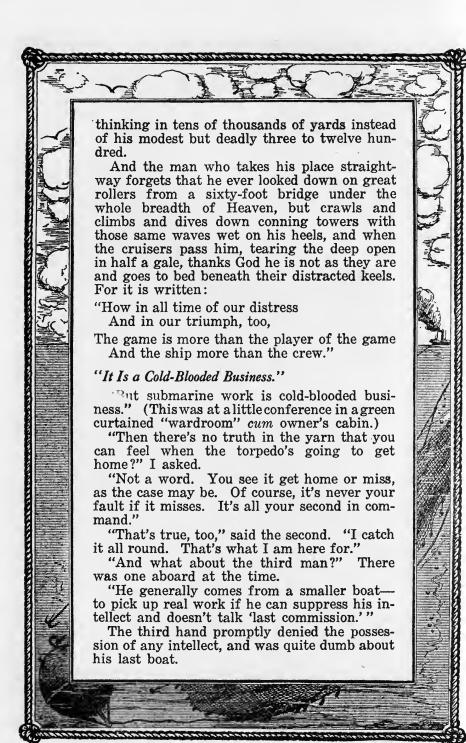


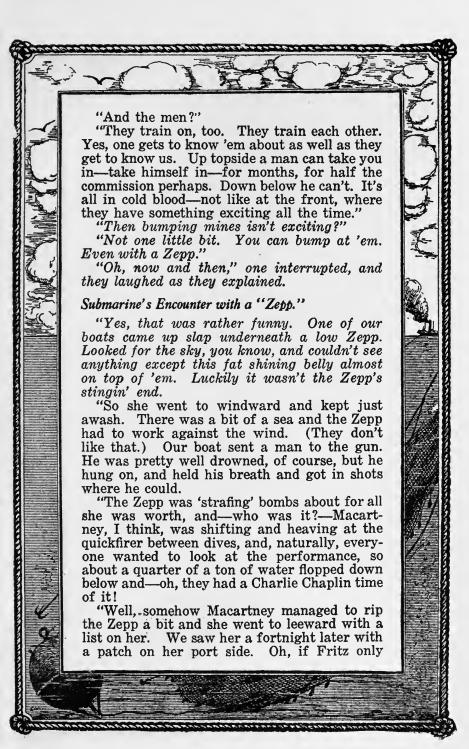


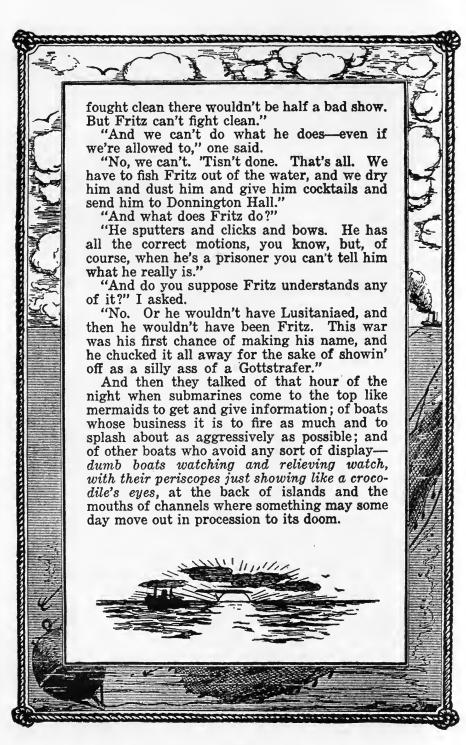


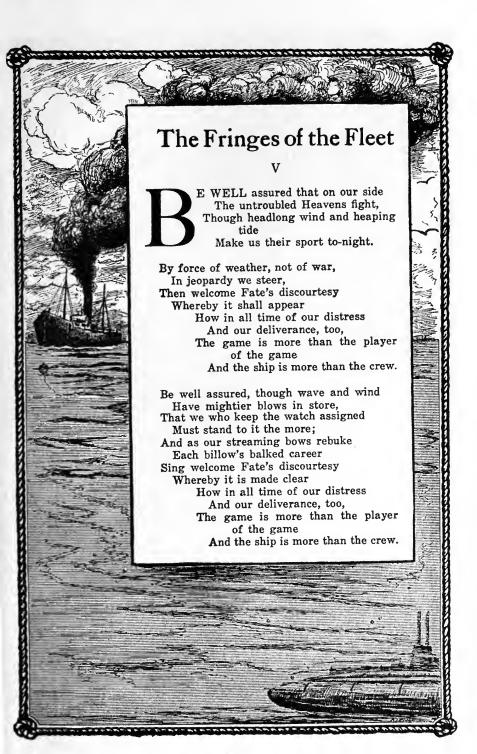


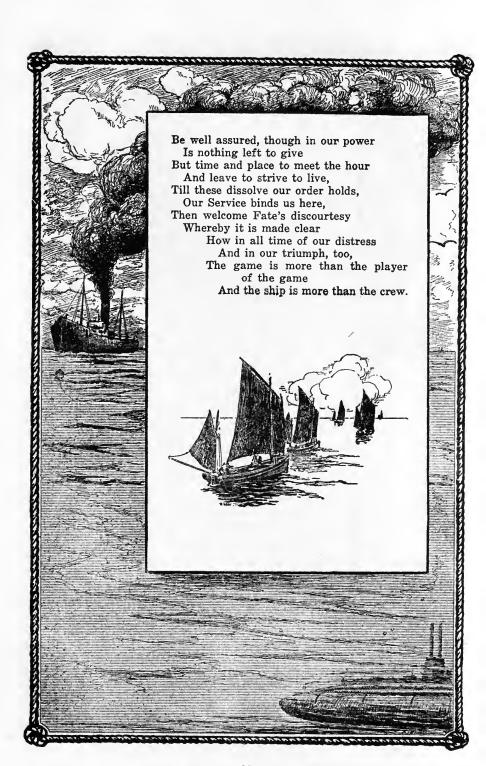


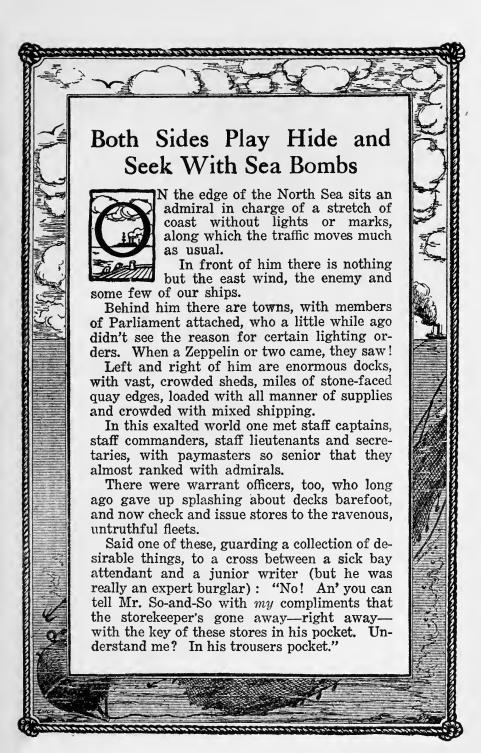


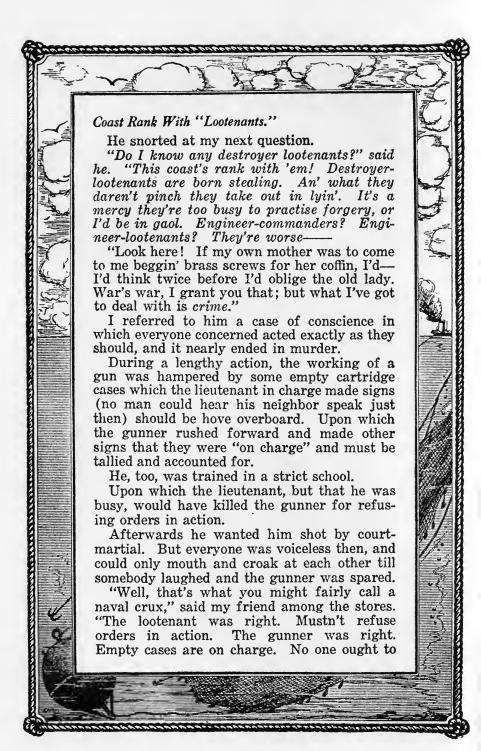


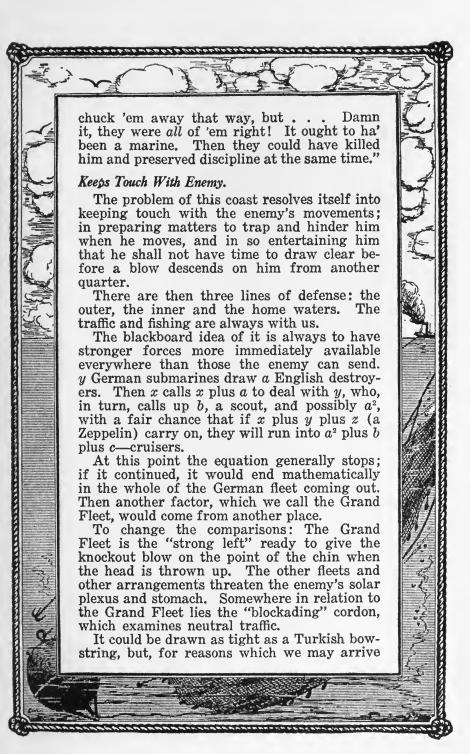


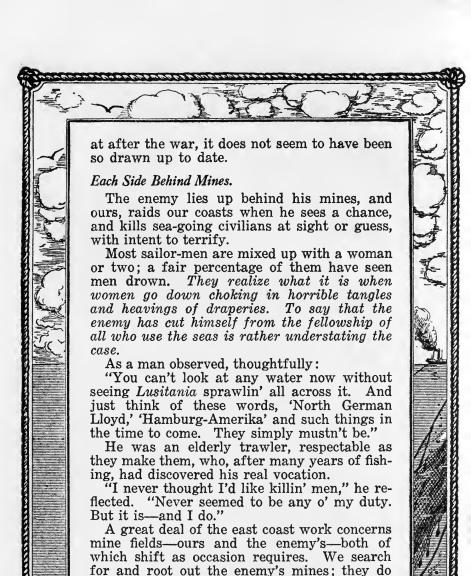










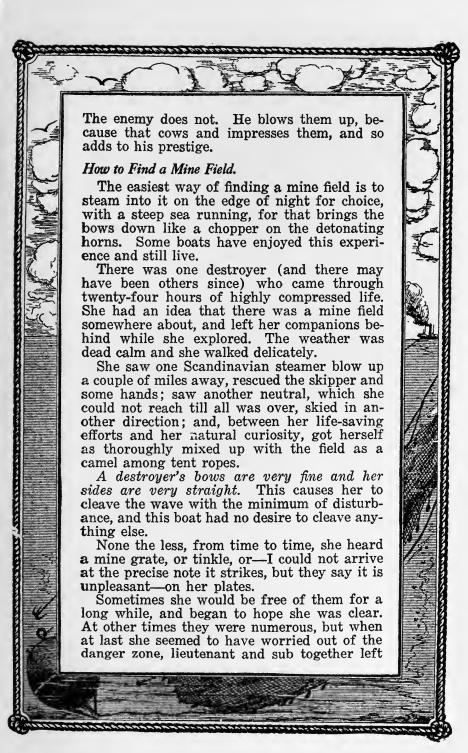


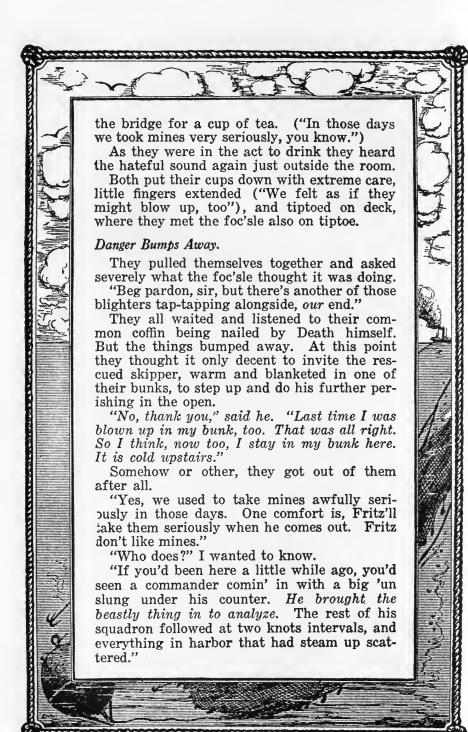
ing, springing and laying traps on the least, as well as the most, likely courses that ships use—such sea-snaring and wiring as the world never dreamed of.

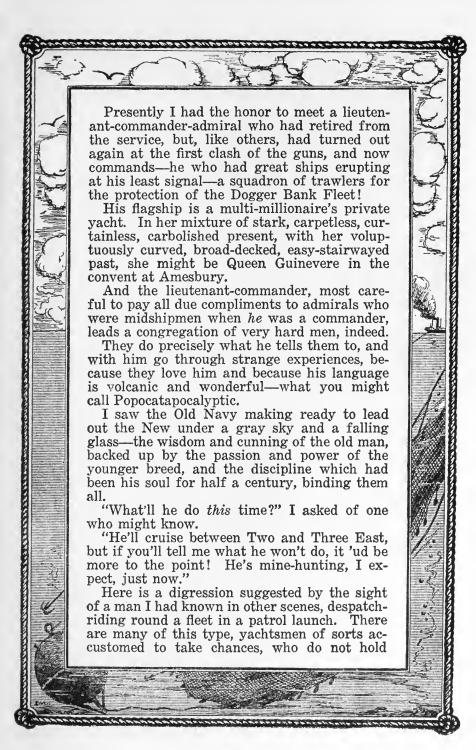
We are hampered in this, because the navy respects neutrals, and spends a great deal of

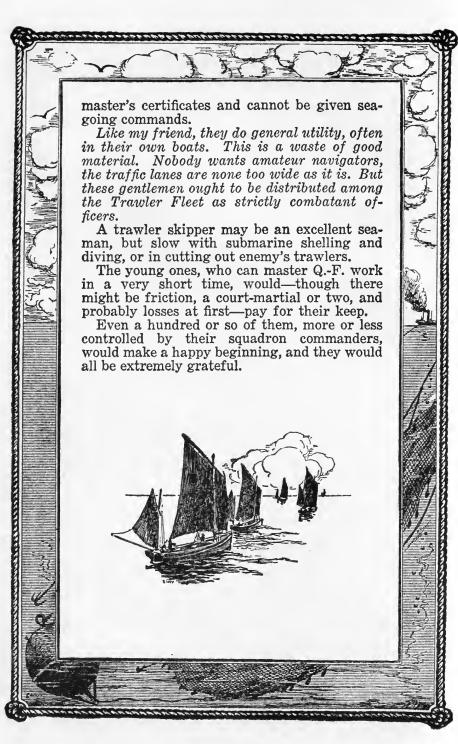
its time in making their path safe for them.

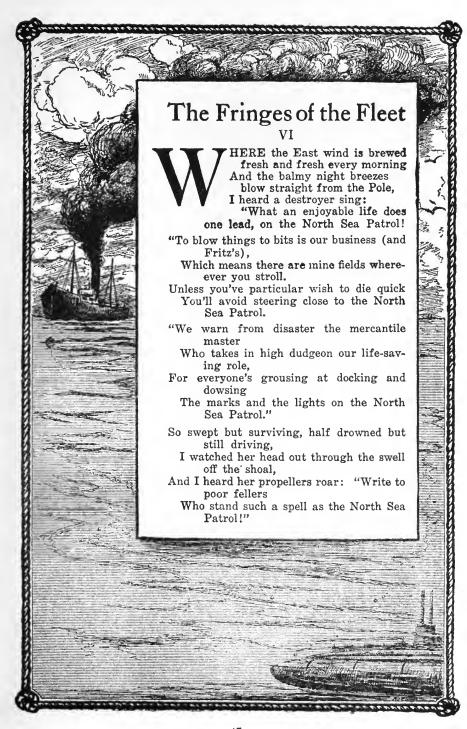
the like by us. It is a perpetual game of find-

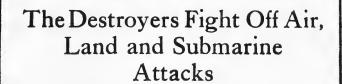














HE great basins were crammed with craft of kinds never known before on any navy list.

Some were as they were born, others had been converted, and a multitude have been designed for special cases. The navy prepares

against all contingencies by land, sea and air.

It was a relief to meet a batch of comprehensible destroyers and to drop again into the little mousetrap wardrooms which are as large-hearted as all our oceans. The men one used to know as destroyer lieutenants are serious commanders and captains to-day, but their sons, lieutenants in command and lieutenant-commanders, do follow them.

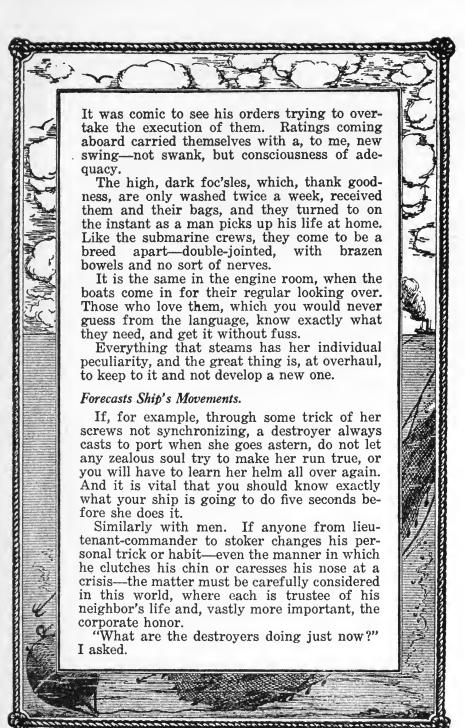
The sea in peace is a hard life; war only sketches an extra line or two round the young mouths. The routine of ships always ready for action is so part of the blood now that no one notices anything except the absence of for-

mality.

Sailors Now Know It All.

What warrant officers used to say at length is cut down to a grunt. What the sailor-man did not know and expected to have told him does not exist. He has done it all too often at sea and ashore.

I watched a little party working under a leading hand at a job which eighteen months ago would have required a gunner in charge.



"Oh, running about, much the same as usual."

The navy hasn't the least objection to telling one everything that it is doing. Unfortunately, it speaks its own language, which is incomprehensible to the civilian. But you will find it all in "The Channel Pilot" and "The Riddle of the Sands."

It is a foul coast, hairy with currents and ripe and mottled with shoals and rocks. Practically the same men hold on here in the same boats with much the same crews for months and months.

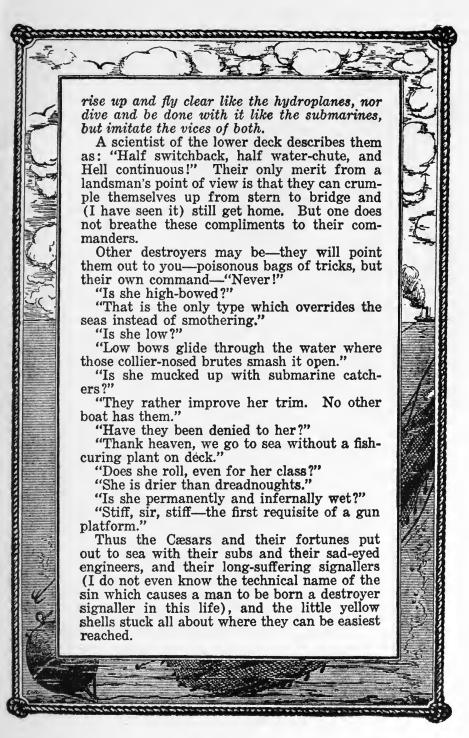
A most senior officer told me that they were "good boys"—on reflection—"quite good boys," but neither he nor the flags on the chart explained how they managed their lightless, unmarked navigation through black night, blinding rain and the crazy, rebounding North Sea gales. They themselves ascribe it to Joss that they have not piled up their boats a hundred times.

"Never Know Your Luck."

"I expect it must be because we're always dodging about over the same ground. One gets to smell it. We've bumped pretty hard, of course, but we haven't expended much up to date. You never know your luck on patrol, though."

Personally, though they have been true friends to me, I loathe destroyers and all the raw, racking, ricochetting life that goes with them—the smell of the wet "lammies" and damp wardroom cushions, the galley chimney smoking out the bridge, the obstacle-strewn deck and the pervading beastliness of oil, grit and greasy iron.

Even at moorings they shiver and sidle like half-backed horses. At sea they will neither



The rest of their acts is written for the information of the Proper Authorities. It reads like a page of Todhunter. But the masters of merchant ships could tell more of eyeless shapes, barely outlined on the foam of their own arrest, who shout orders through the thick gloom alongside.

The strayed and anxious neutral knows them when their searchlights pin him across the deep, or their sirens answer the last howl of his before steam goes out of his torpedoed boilers.

They stand by to catch and soothe him in his pajamas at the gangway, collect his scattered lifeboats, and see a warm drink into him before

they turn to hunt the slayer.

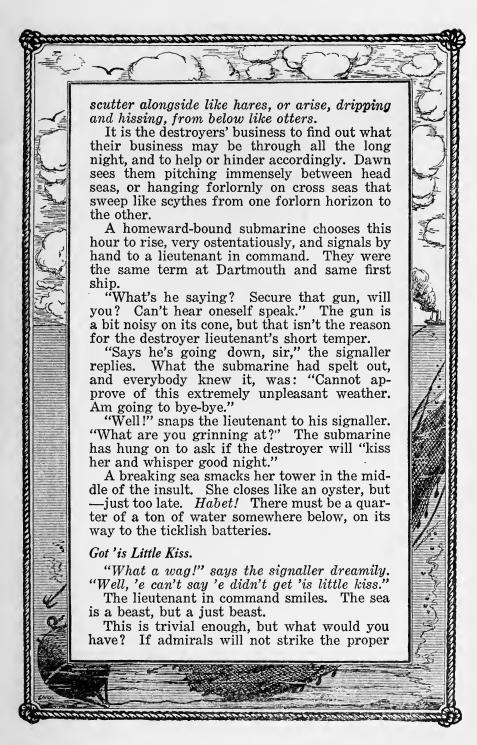
The drifters, punching and reeling up and down their ten-mile line of traps, the outer trawlers, drawing the very teeth of Death with water-sodden fingers, are grateful for their low, guarded signals; and when the Zeppelin's revealing star-shell cracks darkness open above him, the answering crack of the invisible destroyers' guns comforts the busy minelayer.

Big cruisers talk to them, too; and what is more, they talk to the cruisers. Sometimes they draw fire—pinkish spurts of light—a long way off, where Fritz is trying to coax them over a mine field he has just laid; or they steal on Fritz in the midst of his job, and the horizon rings with barking, which the inevitable neutral, who saw it all, reports as "a heavy fleet

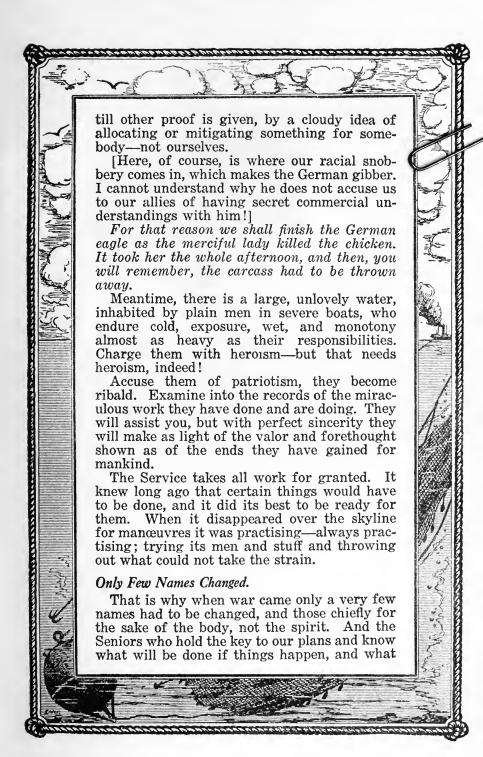
action in the North Sea."

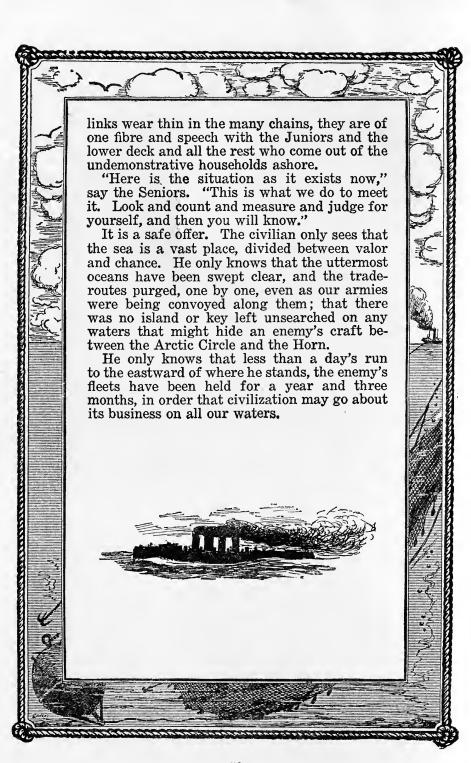
Sea Alive After Dark.

The sea after dark can be as alive as the woods of Summer nights. Everything is exactly where you don't expect it, and the shyest creatures are the farthest away from their holes. Things boom overhead like bitterns, or









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